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ABSTRACT

This manual details the principles and practices of the Refugee Families Program (RFP) in Chicago and the issues that have arisen in connecting these families to the educational, medical, welfare, and other institutions that can provide the family-strengthening support they need. The approach of RFP is to work with families through their preschool-age children, to help them prepare their child for public school, and to introduce parents to concepts of child development foreign to their culture but necessary for adjusting to the new environment. Part 1 presents an overview of the program, including the goals of the program, service components, a description of the refugees (mostly Cambodian and Vietnamese) and their needs, intercultural issues, and a description of the recruitment and follow-up procedures. Part 2 describes the four program components: (1) child-parent preschool classes, including curriculum and activities, working with parents, teacher techniques, and group dynamics; (2) after-school homework classes; (3) family service component to facilitate relationships with outside institutions and help families deal with parent-child relationships, household management, and domestic violence; and (4) language instruction for parents. Part 3 deals with program administration, including recruitment, /training, and supervision of teachers and bilingual staff and recruitment, training, supervision, and functions of volunteers. Part 4 reviews many of the lessons learned in the evolution of the program and outlines the planning needed to set up a similar program. Appendices describe the theoretical framework and curriculum for the child-parent classes and contains program and evaluation forms. (KB)

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